



Gulf Islands Guide



Renewal and Rebirth

Gulf Islands National Seashore continues to renew and rebuild following the devastating effects of the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons. Seashore renewal takes place daily, as animals and plants progress through their life cycle, and grains of sand shift with winds, currents, and storms. However, the average visitor will notice more tangible signs, such as construction of roads and visitor services, a new documentary film, new museum exhibits in Florida and 400 new wayside exhibits throughout the Park.

Signs of progress abound in both districts of Gulf Islands National Seashore. In Mississippi, a temporary visitor contact station opened in Davis Bayou in 2006; this year the original Visitor Center will be renovated. West Ship Island reopened with temporary visitor services in 2006; construction of new facilities will begin this year.

In Florida, the Fort Pickens Area on Santa Rosa Island is accessible via foot, bike, or boat. J. Earle Bowden Way will reopen in stages this year, beginning with Navarre to Opal Beach. Fort Barrancas is open with new Visitor Center exhibits. Okaloosa and Perdido Key are also open for picnicking and swimming.

Enjoy the renewal and rebirth of the natural world, or step back in time to enjoy historic fortifications. Seize the opportunities offered at Gulf Islands National Seashore, one of America's special places.



The Davis Bayou fishing pier has been rebuilt since Hurricane Katrina.



New Perdido Key pavilions provide gulf side picnicking.



Road construction between Pensacola Beach and Navarre Beach will be completed in 2008.

Welcome from the Superintendent

Welcome to Gulf Islands National Seashore!
This park is the largest of the ten national seashore sites within the National Park System and generally ranks within the top ten most visited of all 390 sites. This year we expect to see substantial progress on major projects within the Seashore which will provide some new and some traditional opportunities for our visitors to enjoy this special place.

Have a safe and enjoyable visit!
Jerry Eubanks, Superintendent

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Visitor Information

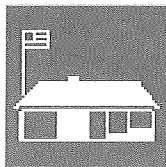
Visitor Centers

Florida

Naval Live Oaks Visitor Center

(850) 934-2600

Open daily ... 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Fort Barrancas Visitor Center

(850) 455-5167

Open daily ... March-Oct. 9:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Nov.-Feb. 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

* Fort Barrancas guided tour daily 2:00 p.m.

* Advanced Redoubt guided tour Sat., 11:00 a.m.

For more information on Florida Interpretive activities call (850) 934-2600 or www.nps.gov/guis.

Fort Pickens Visitor Center

Temporarily closed.

Self-guided tours daily 8:00 a.m.-sunset.

Mississippi

Visitor Contact Station

(228) 875-9057, ext. 100

Open daily ... 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Pets

Pets are permitted in the seashore only along roads and in parking areas. They must be on a leash of 6 feet or less. Only service dogs are allowed in structures, Florida district beaches, and on Horn and Petit Bois Islands in Mississippi. Owners are required to pick up after their pets and dispose of waste properly. Please do not leave pets unattended in vehicles on warm days.



Entrance Fees - Florida Only

Single Person Entry \$3.00

(Foot, bicycle, motorcycle for 7 days)

Single Vehicle Pass \$8.00

(Valid for 7 days)

Gulf Islands Annual Park Pass \$25.00

(Valid 1 year from month of purchase)

Night Owl Permit \$30.00

(Extends hours-of-access for single private vehicle. Requires an annual pass bearing a matching signature to the permit. Limit two signatures.)

America the Beautiful - the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass

Interagency - Annual Pass \$80.00

Interagency - Senior Pass \$10.00

Interagency - Access Pass FREE

Commercial Vehicles:

Vehicles (1-6 passengers) \$25.00

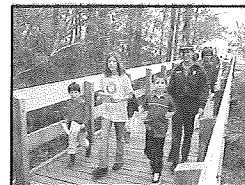
(plus \$3.00 per person)

Vans and Minibuses (7-25 passengers) .. \$40.00

Motor Coaches(26+ passengers) \$100.00

Hiking

Some of the most beautiful barrier island beaches and maritime forests await those who are willing to take a hike. The park boasts several trails that provide several hiking opportunities - from a short 10-minute stroll to several days of foot travel. See pages 8 and 10. Maps are available at the park visitor centers.



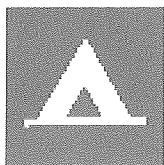
Florida - Florida National Scenic Trail,
Woodland, and Andrew Jackson.

Mississippi - Nature's Way Loop
Davis Bayou Trail

Bicycling

Florida law requires riders age 16 or younger to wear a helmet. Bicycles are allowed on roadways and multi-use paths. They are not allowed on nature trails, except for sections of the Florida National Scenic Trail. Keep to the right side of the road and ride in single file.

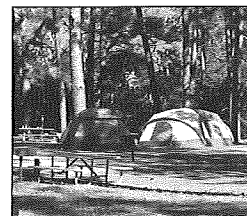
Camping



Camping

Mississippi, Davis Bayou

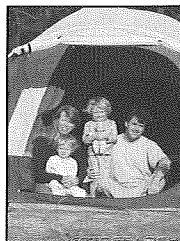
First come, first serve. \$16.00 per night
\$8.00 for seniors or
Golden Access pass.



Primitive Camping

Mississippi

Primitive camping is permitted on Horn, Petit Bois, Cat and East Ship islands. Permits are required for groups of 11 or more. Call (228) 875-3962.



Florida - \$10.00

Perdido Key - Self registration at Ranger Station.

Fort Pickens - Hike, bike or boat to Loop A. 5 miles from entrance.

Group Camping

10-25 people: \$20 per night

26-40 people: \$30 per night

FL -Naval Live Oaks (850) 934-2620

(youth groups only)

MS - (228) 875-3962 (organized groups only)

Pavilion Reservations

Some pavilions may be reserved for exclusive use. Groups over 100 people or the use of special equipment such as generators, music systems, and public address systems require a Special Use Permit.



Florida (850) 934-2620

Naval Live Oaks Group Area Pavilion \$50

Perdido Key Area Pavilions \$30

Mississippi (228) 875-3962

1-99 people: \$25

100 plus: \$100

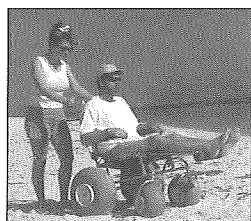
• Davis Bayou Pavilions #1, 3, 5



Fires and Firewood

Campfires are permitted in picnic and camping site grills and below the high tide line on all Mississippi District islands, except for West Ship. Dead wood which has already fallen to the ground may be collected for campfires in the Naval Live Oaks Group and Fort Pickens campground.

Accessibility

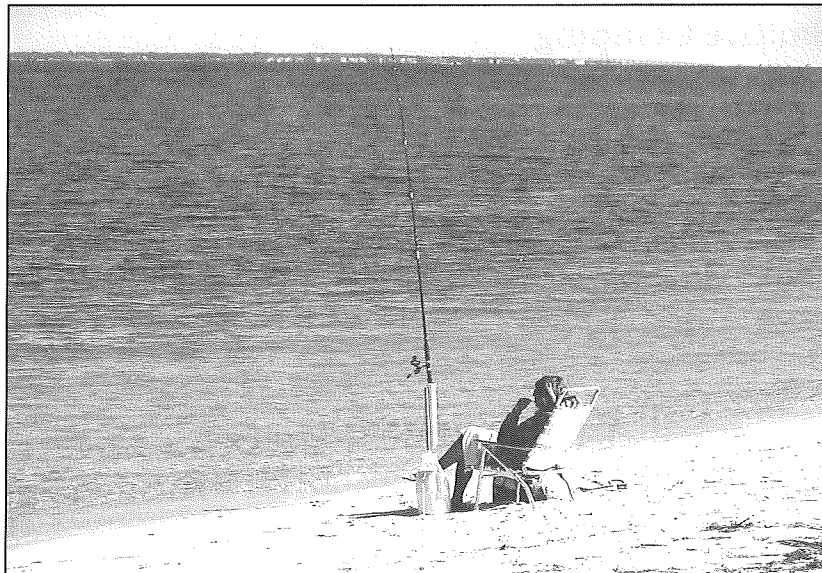


Beach wheelchair: In Florida, call the Fort Barrancas Visitor Center at (850) 455-5167. Otherwise contact the lifeguards at Johnson Beach when on duty. In Mississippi, West Ship Island, call (228) 875-9057, ext. 100.

Orientation films are available at visitor centers. All in Florida are closed captioned. Mississippi has "Coastal Forts" closed captioned.

Visiting the Area

You've driven many miles to get here and have finally arrived at your destination: Gulf Islands National Seashore. But now what? How do you spend your time? What should you explore? The park is big and often visitors have a limited amount of time. Let us help you!



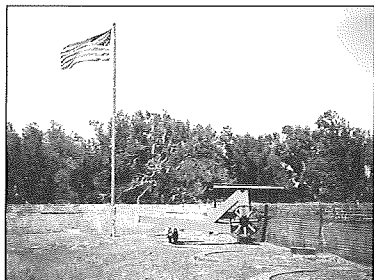
What is open in the park as of January 1, 2008?

District	Area	Comments: For up-to-date information call FL (850) 934-2600, MS (228) 875-9057 or go to www.nps.gov/guis
Florida	Naval Live Oaks	Open 8:00 a.m. to sunset.
Florida	Fort Barrancas	Open. Fort tour daily at 2:00 p.m.
Florida	Advanced Redoubt	Open. Fort tour Saturdays, 11:00 a.m.
Florida	Perdido Key	Open 7:30 a.m. to sunset and to primitive camping.
Florida	Fort Pickens	Open to boaters and pedestrians 8:00 a.m. to sunset. Campground Loop A open.
Florida	Santa Rosa	Open to boaters and pedestrians sunrise to sunset. All structures are closed.
Florida	Okaloosa	Open 7:00 a.m. to sunset.
Mississippi	Davis Bayou	Open 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Campground is now open.
Mississippi	West Ship Island	Open sunrise to sunset.
Mississippi	Horn, East Ship, Petit Bois, Cat and Spoil Islands	Open for primitive camping

What to Do

Florida District

One Day



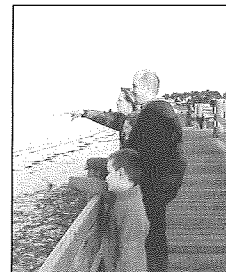
- Take a ranger-led tour of Fort Barrancas everyday at 2:00 p.m.
- View the park's orientation film at the Naval Live Oaks Visitor Center.
- Visit Perdido Key and relax on the beaches.
- Spend an afternoon fishing from the beach at Naval Live Oaks.

Three Days



- Take a ranger-led tour on Saturdays of the fort at Advanced Redoubt.
- Hike the Trench Trail between Fort Barrancas and Advanced Redoubt.
- Attend a ranger guided program. Programs vary by season.
- Participate in the Junior Ranger or Sea Star programs for children.

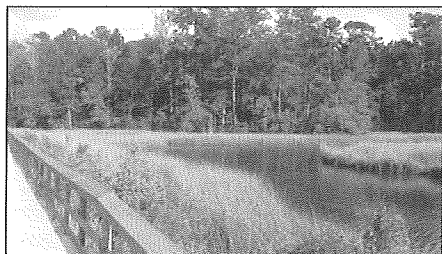
One Week



- Hike, bike or boat to the Fort Pickens Area and tour historic fortifications and enjoy a primitive camping experience.
- Primitive camp at Perdido Key.
- Youth Groups can camp in the youth group camp area at Naval Live Oaks. Call (850) 934-2620 for reservations.

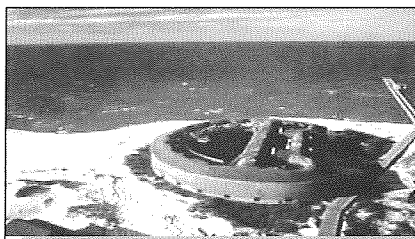
Mississippi District

One Day



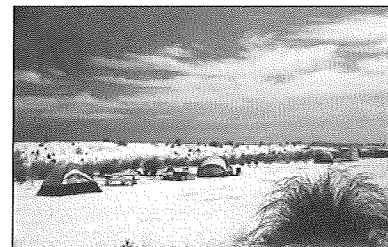
- View orientation films at the Visitor Contact Station.
- Walk the Davis Bayou Trail.
- Look for alligators in the alligator pond.
- Enjoy a picnic lunch under the shade of live oak trees.
- Spend an afternoon fishing or crabbing from the boat launch area.

Three Days

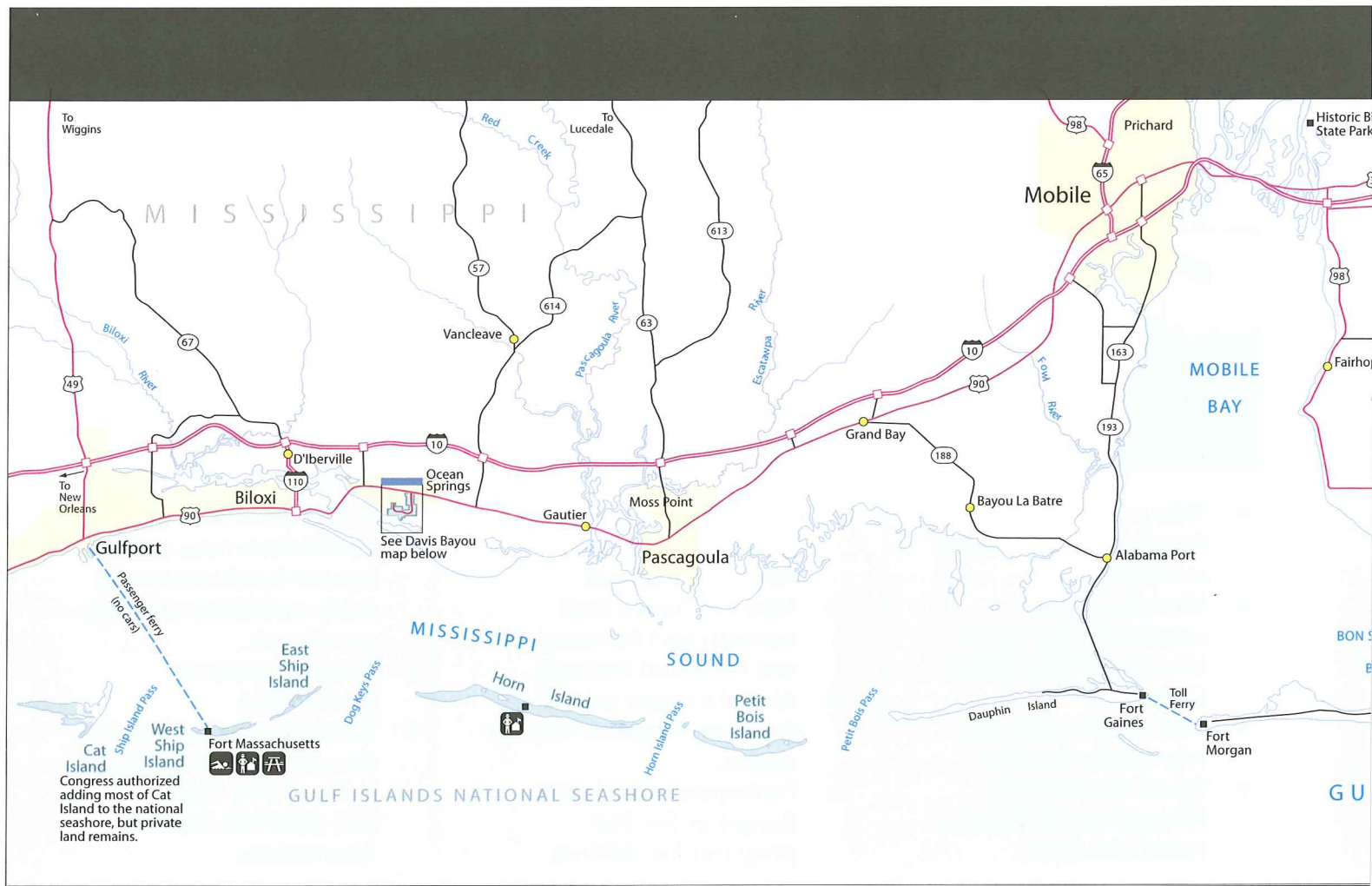


- Take the passenger ferry to West Ship Island (March-October.)
- Explore Fort Massachusetts on West Ship Island.
- Explore the bayou by canoe or kayak.
- Bike the Live Oaks Bicycling Route.
- Attend a ranger guided program.

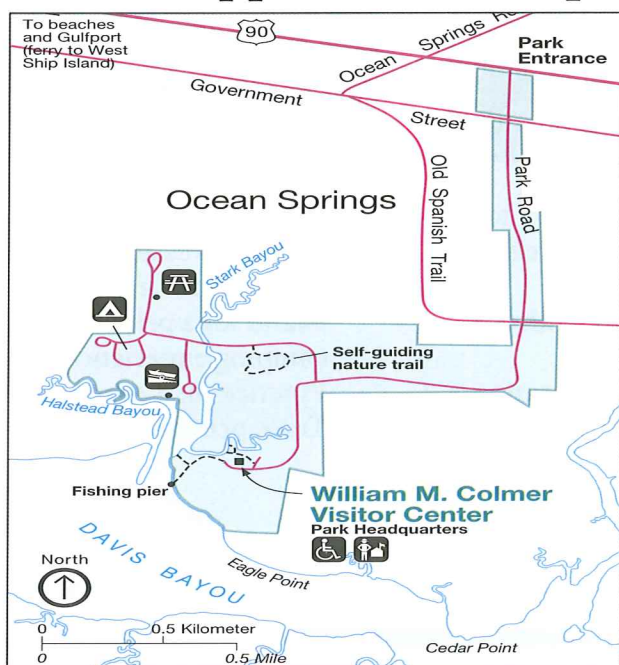
One Week



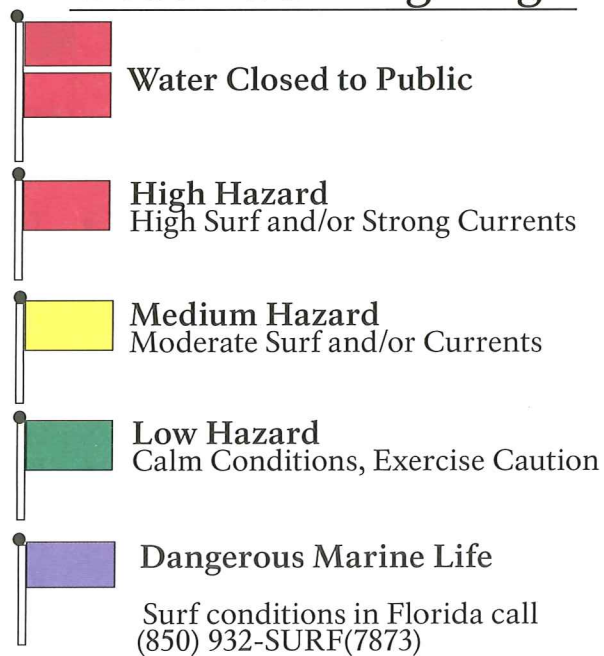
- Take your own boat or charter a vessel and travel to Petit Bois or Horn Island for a primitive camping experience. Practice the Leave No Trace principles.

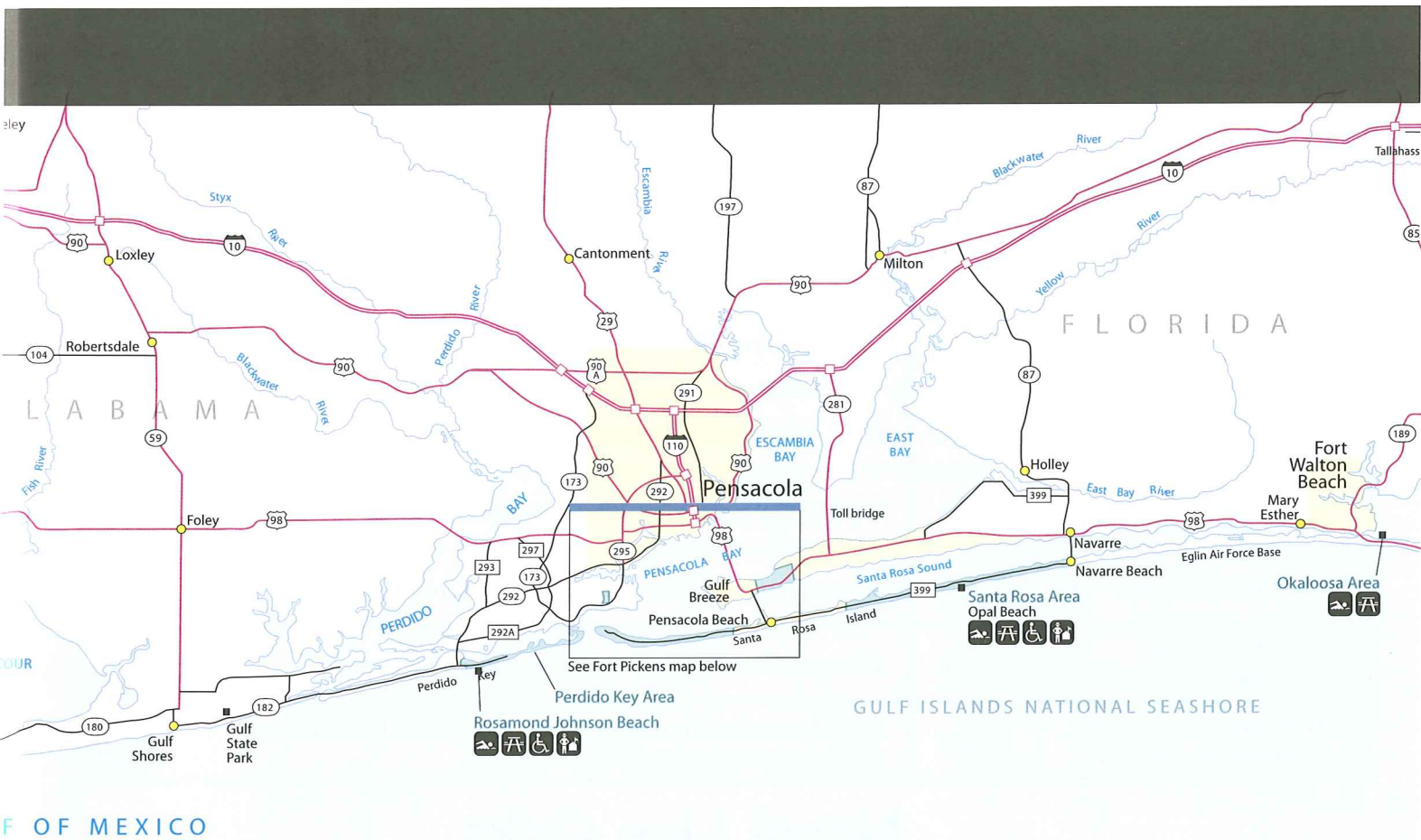


Mississippi District Map

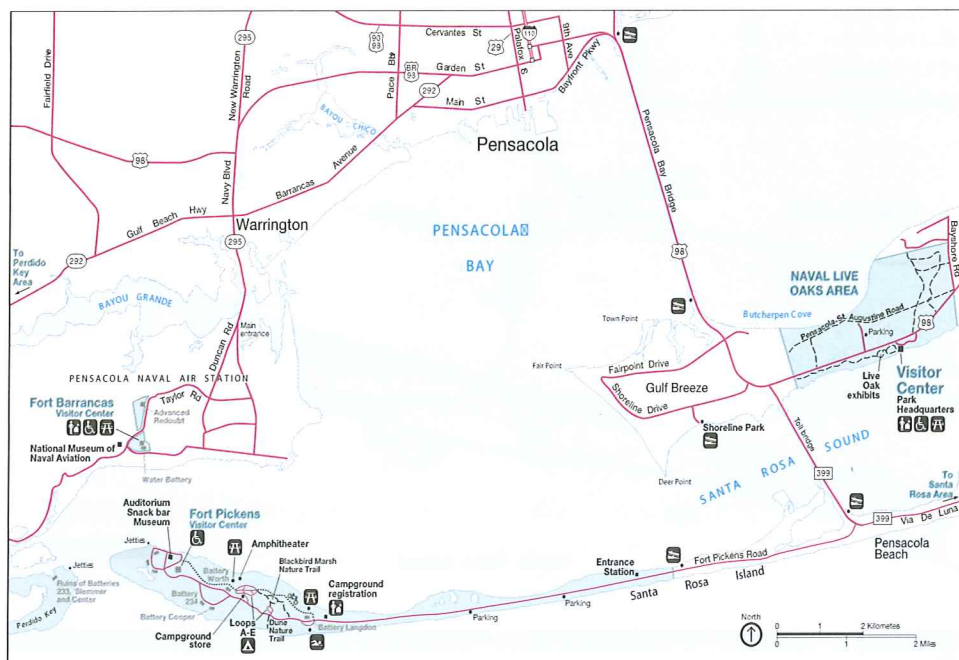


Beach Warning Flags


















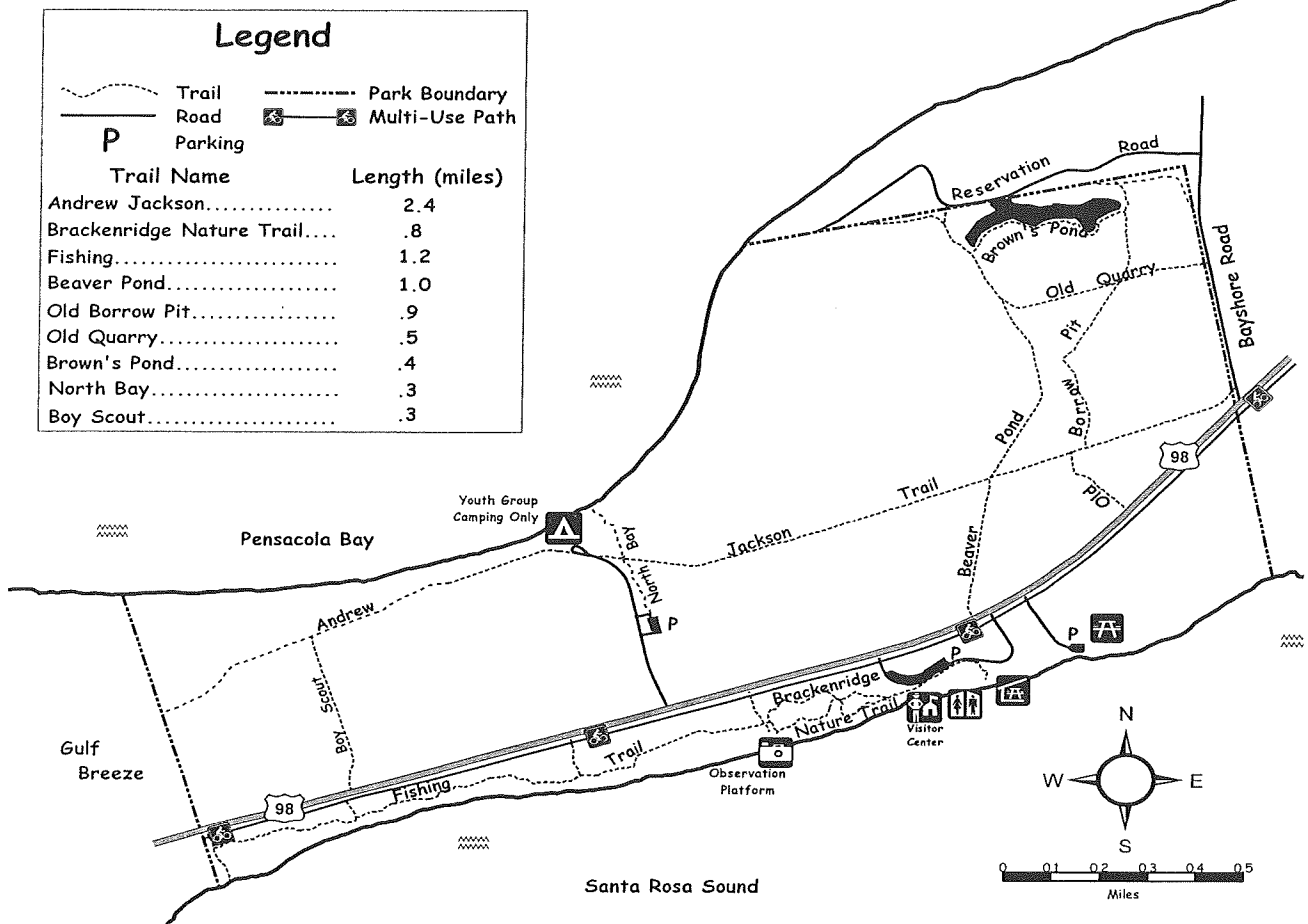
Florida District Map



Exploring Florida

Trail Name	Trail Length	Comments
Florida National Scenic Trail	28.2 miles	Starts the 1,300 mile trail to Big Cypress National Preserve.  
Brackenridge Nature Trail (Naval Live Oaks Area)	.8 mile	Information on historic uses of live oak trees in shipbuilding.  
Andrew Jackson Trail (Naval Live Oaks Area)	2.4 miles	Follows historic St. Augustine-Pensacola Road.  
Multi-use Path (Naval Live Oaks Area)	2 miles	Asphalt trail for cyclists, hikers and roller blades.  
Perdido Key Discovery Trail	.25 mile	Crosses a salt marsh, maritime forest and rolling dunes.  
Trench Trail (Fort Barrancas Area)	.5 mile	Connects Fort Barrancas to the Advanced Redoubt.  
Woodland Nature Trail (Fort Barrancas Area)	.5 mile	Stroll through a forest of sand pines - a species found only in SE Alabama and coastal NW Florida. 

Naval Live Oaks



National Seashore News Briefs

Santa Rosa Island Roadways Rebuild J. Earle Bowden Way and Fort Pickens Road

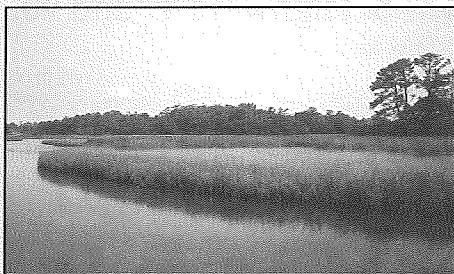
Work on reconstructing J. Earle Bowden Way (the park road connecting Pensacola Beach and Navarre



Beach) began in October, 2007 and is expected to be completed in March or April of this year. The environmental compliance for Fort Pickens Road reconstruction was completed in September, 2007, and the design planning and engineering is underway. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2008 with a completion date of spring, 2009.

Davis Bayou Visitor Center Planning Begins

Hurricane Katrina's storm surge washed through Mississippi's William M. Colmer Visitor Center



in August 2005. Although new exhibits will not be completed for several years, basic building rehabilitation plans have been approved. The park hopes to reopen the visitor center in 2008.

The Park's Future in the General Management Plan

The Seashore's General Management Plan (GMP) process is continuing. The completed GMP will guide park management for the next 15 – 20 years.

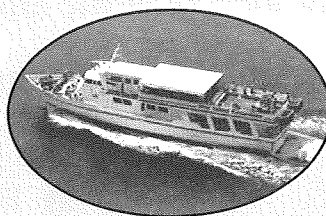
Based upon internal scoping, public meetings, and public comments received in response to the draft alternatives, a draft preferred alternative and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be developed in 2008. After internal review, the draft document will go out for additional public review in early 2009.



Take a Boat Ride to West Ship Island, MS








Everyday, March - October, West Ship Island offers visitors the natural beauty of a fragile barrier island environment and compelling stories of American history. Take a stroll, sit and relax, or take a

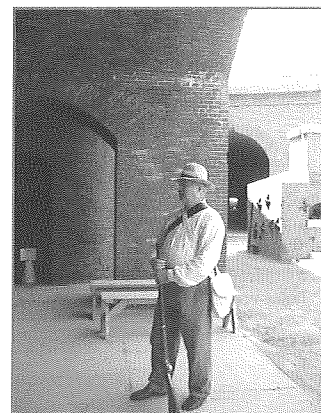
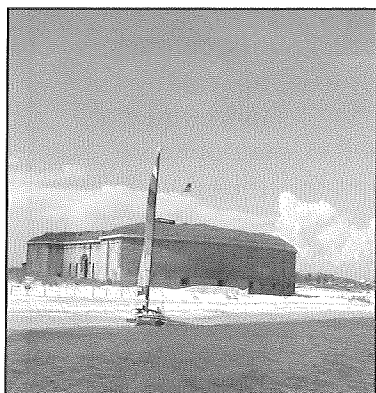
tour. Free, ranger-led tours of Fort Massachusetts are offered seasonally twice daily. Learn how the role Ship Island and Fort Massachusetts



have played in the American story. Other interpretive programs are offered seasonally. Access to West Ship Island is available via passenger ferry or by private boat. For ferry rates and schedules see page 10, call Ship Island Excursions at 1-866-GO-MS-FUN or go to www.msshipisland.com.

Exploring Mississippi

Trail Name	Trail Length	Comments
William M. Colmer Visitor Center Trails	100 yards	Provides the best views of Davis Bayou; ends overlooking the Mississippi Sound. A short walk from the visitor contact station will take you to the old pier.  
Nature's Way Trail	.9 mile loop	Traverses a maritime forest, an ancient dune system, and an adjacent salt marsh.  
Live Oaks Bicycling Route	15 miles	Winds along roads in the park (2 miles) and the adjacent community of Ocean Springs (13 miles.) 
Davis Bayou Trail	1 mile	Provides a route from the visitor center to the picnic areas with links to the CCC Overlook and Nature's Way Trails. 
CCC Trail	.2 miles	A former Civilian Conservation Corps road bed leads to an overlook of the salt marsh and CCC built ruins. 

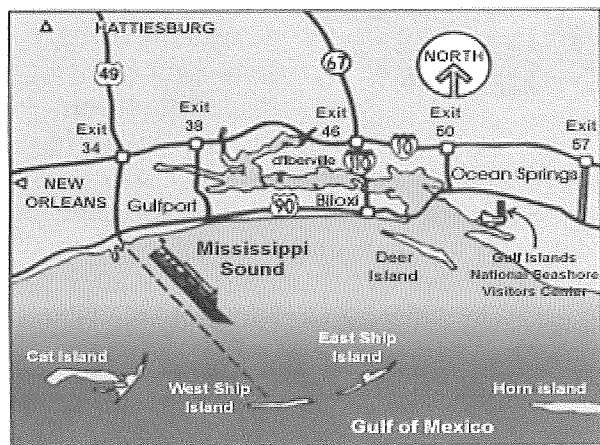


Day Trips to West Ship Island and Fort Massachusetts

Pan Isles, Inc.
National Park Concessionaire

One hour passenger ferryboat service to West Ship departs from the Gulfport Yacht Harbor located at the intersection of U.S. Highways 49 and 90.

Weather Permitting



For information on a complete arrival and departure schedule please call

1-866-466-7386

or

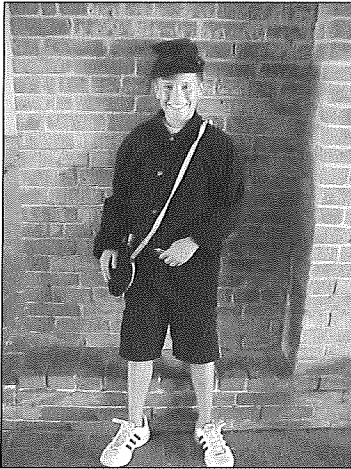
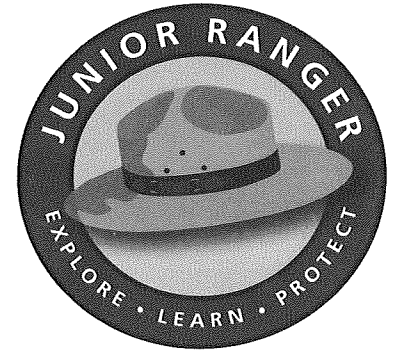
1-228-864-1014

www.msshipisland.com

Kid's Programs

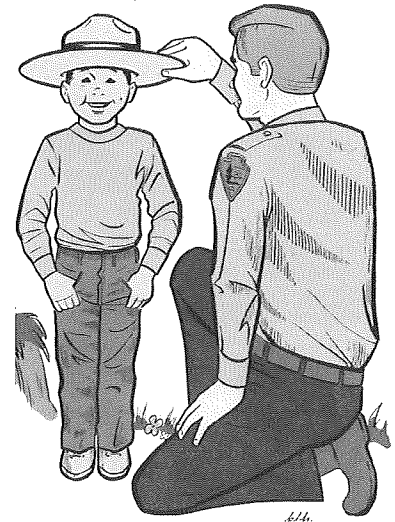
Junior Rangers and Sea Stars

Hi Kids! Looking for something to do while visiting the park? Become a Junior Ranger or a Sea Star. Pick up your free handbook at one of the visitor centers. These handbooks are for children but anyone can participate. When you have completed the handbook return it and receive a surprise!



Be a Ship Island Soldier

Young visitors can learn the drill, wear the uniform and learn about the day-to-day life of Civil War soldiers stationed on Ship Island. This one hour program targets ages 9-12, but everyone is welcome! To arrange a park or classroom visit, group leaders should call (228) 875-9057 ext. 100.



Be a Web Ranger

Now you can be a Junior Ranger even if you are not able to visit a National Park. Become a member of a growing group of young people who are interested in the world around them and involved with their nation's heritage...The Web Ranger! Just visit the web site www.nps.gov/webrangers and start your journey.

School Groups

Mississippi

The park offers a wide variety of programs designed for students of all ages. Very young children will enjoy the story and craft activities offered during our "Reading Ranger" programs. Elementary, middle and high school educators have many program options to choose from, including the popular "Animal Wrappers" and "Cast For Your Catch" curriculum-based educational programs. A free guided-tour of Fort Massachusetts is an exciting option for educators and students riding the ferry to West Ship Island. Call (228) 875-9057, ext. 106 or 111.

Florida

Curriculum-based programs are offered October, November, March, April and May for students third through fifth grades. Programs include naturalist barrier island walks at Perdido Key or historic Fort Barrancas tours. Videos, "Discover the Seashore" and "Pensacola in the Civil War," and traveling trunks "Coastal Critters and Seafaring Sailor" are also available. Naval Live Oaks features the movies "The Lorax" and "Creatures of the Deep" for kindergarden through second grades. Reservations are required. Call (850) 916-3001.

Safety



Guarded Lifeguarded Beaches

BEACH OPENINGS ARE TENTATIVE

Please call (850) 934-2600

Remember

- Do not swim at dawn, dusk or night; these are prime feeding times for sharks.
- Do not swim in hazardous surf conditions.
- Use insect repellent when mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk.
- Do not pick plants or harass animals in the seashore. Stay on open beaches and marked trails.
- Forts were not designed for comfort or safety. Please use caution when exploring them.
- Do not leave anything valuable in your car.
- Pets and glass containers are not allowed on the beach.
- During thunderstorms move inside to a building or vehicle. If swimming or fishing get out of the water immediately.

Being Prepared at Gulf Islands

Bringing a few extra items to the Seashore can enhance your visit:

- Swim at a lifeguarded beach.
- Wear sunglasses and a hat.
- Use a sun screen lotion with a SPF rating of 30 or higher.
- Carry a flashlight with you while visiting the historic forts that have dark corridors.
- Bring a plastic bottle of vinegar to soothe the pain from contact with a jellyfish.

What to do in an Emergency

If you have a cell phone call park dispatch at (850) 916-3010 or *55 in Florida and 911 in Mississippi or contact an employee in the field. During business hours go to a park visitor center.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Gulf Islands National Seashore
Superintendent
1801 Gulf Breeze Parkway
Gulf Breeze, FL 32563-5000

Phone
(850) 934-2600

Website
www.nps.gov/guis

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



Volunteers-in-Parks

V.I.P.s share their talents, skills and interests with the National Park Service, paying one of the highest compliments possible by offering a most valued possession - their time. For information on volunteer opportunities in this park write to: Volunteer Coordinator, 1801 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Gulf Breeze, Florida 32563-5000.

Eastern National is a non-profit organization that operates bookstores in national parks and seashores, providing service to the public, and returning a percentage of proceeds to assist visitor services at Gulf Islands National Seashore.



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